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The Diary of a Trip taken by A. B. Moler and Wife

February 1912

Illustrations Courtesy National Railways of Mexico

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Park Row Station Chicago.

Today, February 6th, we are on our way to Mexico, and we want to take you with us. We are leaving the Park Row Station of the Illinois Central at 9:40 A. M., and as we walk down Michigan Ave., the chilly wind of this zero day cuts and bites as it sweeps from the sea of ice that now covers frigid Lake Michigan.

After due deliberation on account of Mexican war talk, we have decided to make this trip, not that we have a desire for war or to leave the cold, for this has been a splendid winter, but rather that we hear the call from far distant mountains, missions, monasteries and monks, and have a thirst for the romance and historic adventures that abound in them.

As we steam away on our pilgrimage that has been long in anticipation, the snow-covered fields of Illinois form a picture in rare contrast to what we expect to see upon awaking in the morning. We find here in this country well stocked farms, substantial farm houses and mammoth barns, but February in Illinois affords no scenery or sights of special interest until Cairo is reached at dusk, when a very pleasant view from the bridge across the Ohio is afforded of the river filled with floating ice.

The next morning, February 7th, breaks bright and fair, and we find ourselves in Mississippi, but to our surprise the weather is crisp and somewhat colder than is usual this time of the year for this semi-tropical climate. Strips of water by the track are covered with sheet ice, thin frost covers the fields, clouds of smoke climb briskly skyward from each cabin chimney, much as it would on an early April morning appear in the North. This country's panorama from our view is one of much small timber, a profuse growth of underbrush, small fields, swamps, bad roads, and the hookworm. We have left the fine farms and their thrifty husbandmen and in their place we have the cabin, the cotton and the colored population.

Our morning ride is interesting on account of the change from snow to starting grass, and shubbery just beginning to show green and we arrive at New Orleans at 3:30, three hours late. New Orleans is always the same old city, quaint and antiquated, on one side of the town, the old French quarters, and up-to-date and stirring on the other. We never hear or think of New Orleans without the lazy old river, the docks and the army of dock hands to be seen there.

Not all tourists are favored with a home at each stopping point, but we are. We take you to our Southern Ancestors' abode, to a good southern dinner, a short visit, and away again at 10 P. M. on the "Southern Pacific", the second leg of our journey.

Thursday morning, February 8th, finds us in Texas. We are at breakfast in the diner as we pull into Beaumont, a city that fairly flowed into prominence from a small village almost over night as it is in the midst of rich oil fields. Rice fields are also here. They are low level tracts so ditched and dammed that thousands of acres can be drained or flooded at will. Oil derricks are everywhere and on all sides, and the one good road of this country parallel with our track, is well patronized by oil wagons and heavy motor cars.

The weather here is about the same as in New Orleans, just a little cool for this season of the year but very pleasant for us Northerners. Farmers are planting, the grass is green, and the vast tracts of cultivated lands show an extremely black soil.

All through this country the trees are covered with a hanging moss and mistletoe, very picturesque indeed, but we are told by natives that this is an unwelcome growth that saps the life of the tree.

We stop at Houston, and are again met by friends for a short chat. We arrive at San Antonio at 8:30, two hours late, and spend the night at the Menger Hotel, that is situated on Alamo Plaza adjoining the historic mission of that name. San Antonio, like New Orleans, is another story in itself and is worthy of a longer visit, but as we hurry on, this must be omitted.

This is Friday morning, February 9th, and we are called from our early morning slumber at 5:30 to be informed that the train South is an hour late, and we can return to our cot for another hour's sleep. We would be more thankful this moment for the extra hour's sleep without this information, but the soft and pleasant voice at the other end of the line is almost worth the early awakening.

We are finally off toward the border line after a hurried breakfast and a hurried taxi ride that brings us to the I. & G. N. Station just one hour too early for the train. I would walk if I had that dollar back.

Our ride this morning is mostly through cactus and sage brush, although there are some signs of improvement and many new settlements over that of five years ago; our last trip on this line.

Each day we read more and more of Mexican War, and it is with some apprehension that we reach the border at Laredo at 2:30 in the afternoon. After the usual delay in changing money and preparing the baggage for Government inspection, we cross the Rio Grande into Mexico. Although there is some insurrection and disturbances along the border line, all is calm and serene at our point of entry, and we are treated with much respect at the hands of the natives. The matter of changing currency here is a

Southern Cabin.

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Mexican Types.

get-rich-quick proposition, for we get two dollars or Mexican Pesos for every one we give to be changed. If I were a millionaire, I would come down here just for the sensation of suddenly becoming a multi-millionaire, or if I were entirely a pauper, I would borrow a dollar, cross the border with my friend, pay him back and have one left for myself.

Going Southward the day has gradually grown warm until now the car windows are open, and the air is as bland as the morning breath of June in Chicago.

We leave Nuevo Laredo, the town on the Mexican side, at 4:30, a matter of two hours waste for baggage inspection, over the National Railway of Mexico. Our first impression of Mexico is cactus, maguey, sand and then more cactus and sand. The people we now see along the way are rural inhabitants and have much the general appearance of our Arizona Indians of semi-civilization, but we must remember that we are entering Mexico by way of the back door.

In passing through we must miss many points of historic interest, all of which reads like a fairy tale in Cortez's Conquest of Mexico.

This is Saturday morning, February 10th, and we are nearing the equator. One gets the impression from this that we are about to experience some very uncomfortable weather, but it is quite the contrary, for we are on a gradual incline and are now nearly six thousand feet above the sea level, which counteracts the otherwise extreme heat of sea level. The air is pleasant, just a tinge of coolness, with a beautiful bright sunshine that is as welcome as it would be back in the North. We are in the foot hills of the Sierra Madre Mountains, and the scenery in parts is quite the same as we passed through the evening before, with the exception of small hills growing larger and a more rolling and broken appearance that gradually grows into a distant mountain range of more prominence.

Still cactus, more sand and adobe huts. From the station one does not have an opportunity to see much of the towns along the way for they are all situated far back in the foot hills entirely hidden by ravines, canyons and small cliffs.

We arrive at San-Louis-Potosi at ten o'clock in the morning, and here we have our first view of a goodly number of all types of Mexicans. Groups of the high class in idle curiosity, the middle class selling their wares and the low class with their entire families each with outstretched hands begging for the centavos that is always forthcoming from the Americans. There are venders of Mexican opals, Mexican pottery, Mexican fruit and Mexican other things the use of which Americans will never know.

This city is one of the principal commercial centers of Central Mexico, and here the country shows signs of American invasion by its haciendas or ranches of thousands of acres. There are some irrigated patches that look like a green rug on the smooth barren waste, so great is the contrast between the watered district and the undisturbed.

At four o'clock we reach Queretaro, a city of forty thousand, the most historic part we have so far visited. A brief article from the Nat'l Rys. of Mexico folder gives us some idea of the history of this town; "This city is interesting as being where the Imperialists under the Archduke Maximilian, made their last staud and where the Austrian would-be emperor was captured, tried and executed. There are many relics of this ephemeral empire scattered through the city.

At this point there are several large cotton and flour mills in operation. The mills employ 2,000 hands. South of the city is the celebrated Canada, noted for its great number of small orchards and market gardens, from which fruit to the value of more than $100,000, Mexican money, is sold annually. At the head of the Canada is a fine spring which has been improved by the municipality for bathing purposes. There are free baths for the poorer people. The water of the spring is also used for irrigating the gardens of the Canada.

The state or municipal palaces are about five minutes walk from the principal plaza. The State Palace, facing the east, contains the legislative and state executive halls and offices, and surrounds a beautiful garden. One room is set aside for historical records, and in this are portraits of prominent men of many epochs, the table on which was signed Maximilian's death warrant and the stools occupied by his generals during the trial.

Catholicism has made Queretaro a stronghold since long before Philip IV decreed it a city in 1655, and today its central portion fairly bristles with cathedral domes. Of the church of Santa Rosa, Charles Dudley Warner wrote: 'One of the finest chapels in the world, and unique. I know of no church in the world so rich in wood carving. It is overlaid with thick gold leaf, almost gold plate, and in some places the gold is overlaid with transparent tortoise shell. The great altar piece, which is said to have been the richest part of the chapel, was wantonly destroyed by the French when they occupied the city.' They tore it down and burned it in order to get the gold. I was told in Queretaro that they took gold to the value of a million and a half dollars. In the center of the wall of the sacristy is an altogether lovely figure of Santa Rosa, which would do no discredit to Murillo.

Queretaro is the greatest opal market in Mexico, the mines being about thirty-five miles, in an air line, south east of the city and near Bernal, a station on the National Railways, through which the tourist passes an hour and a half after leaving Queretaro. The aqueduct, nearly five miles long, and in places a hundred feet high, supplies the city's water, taken from mountain reservoirs.

Southeast of Queretaro, the line leads through no large cities, but through, first, a canyon, five miles long, and then a great hacienda country, whose adobe pueblos are so near the tracks, in many instances, that the tourist can study peon life intimately without leaving the car. The highest point on this route is Escandon, elevation 7,700 feet.

Primitive Farming.

Pottery Market.

Colonia Station National Railway of Mexico.

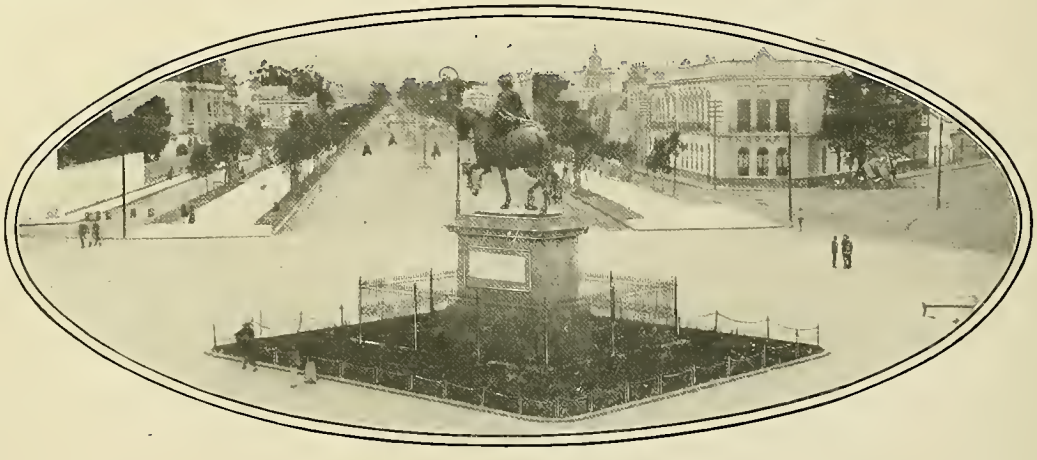
Here we secured the "Mexican Herald" a paper printed in English, and read of the battle at Cuernavaca. This stirs up some little commotion for it is now evident we will encounter some difficulty in making some of our side trips if we are not indeed interfered with before we reach Mexico City. Mexico now begins to show some signs of her natural scenery of which she may justly boast. As we gradually take the raise to the higher altitude, the mountain range still shows above us on either side, and the many canyons like gaping caves of destruction over which we cross, keeps one spellbound the entire afternoon.

A short ride brings us to the pretentious apartments or Edificio De Vendinds. Here complications arise as to the best way of keeping track of our Mexican and our baggage while we look up the particular apartment. We know by reputation the traits of these cocheros, and have learned that you are only sure of your possessions so long as they are in your sight. We desired to hold the cochero until we could ascertain whether or not we were in the right place, or whether we would need him to take us to a hotel. We finally settled affairs by taking our baggage with us, and by signifying in gestures, (our best Spanish) that we want him to wait. He would probably have been there yet without our gestulations for these fellows will wait so long for their pay that one paying promptly feels justified in asking for the regular 2% off. We were finally located and our cochero dismissed. Although there is a strict law governing the rates allowed cocheros, he argues us out of double fare, probably because he speaks Spanish and it looks and sounds like another rebellion to us.

After a night's rest in American quarters, we look out on a grand morning and a most magnificent view. We see over the city's roofs the foot hills and farther back the snow-capped mountain tops. The nights here are always a little chilly. We, from the North, even find our wraps necessary, but with this tropical sun on duty these winter days are always splendid.

This is Sunday, February 11th, and we start the day by engaging another cochero and leave our apartments at Roma Street just off the Paseo the principal boulevard, for a drive around town. This boulevard in its design, is somewhat like our Grand Boulevard with a broad center driveway, a narrower sidewalk, flower beds and tropical foliage of many kinds. We could spend as much money on a boulevard but never could build one as picturesque on account of climatic conditions. This Paseo leads from the Iron Horse in the center of the city to Chapultepec which is the White House and Westpoint of Mexico.

It is at present the home of President Madero and is located a distance of two miles from the city. This boulevard is quite historic as it was laid out by and during the reign of Maximiliano and Carlota in 1865 and has been the roadway of the Aztec Indians from time unknown.



Iron Horse and Pasco.

We reach our destination at 11 P. M. arriving at the beautiful Colonia station of the Nat'l. Rys. of Mexico" that is located well toward the heart of the city. We are here disappointed in not finding our relatives at the station, so we hand our baggage over to a colored porter, who speaks English and who evidently had a line of lieutenants, or perhaps competitors, and away the mob rush for a cochero. In true Mexican style he gingles up with his two little Mexican ponies on the jump. They are running fast but like a sewing machine, all in one place and the entire roadway leading through the entrance is filled with the accompanying aid-de-camp each one pushing and shoving his nearest companion in order to be the first to handle a grip or in some way be entitled to a tip. As the cochero rattles off (all cocheros here rattle) the delegate starts in pursuit and follow along on a run until each has received his allowance and drops by the wayside out of breath. Since witnessing a similiar performance at numerous times, I have wondered why some of these fellows do not find out how much easier it would be to work, but this is Mexico.

We first drive to the flower market, the most pleasant sight of the city where great floral pieces are on display, and where one can get violets, roses and many other native flowers at a much less price than obtainable anywhere else, for this is the country where they grow without cultivation the entire year. From here we drive on to the uptown ticket office of the Plaza De Toro the place of the bull fight. We next visit the Zocolo which is in the very center of the city bounded by the Cathedral, the Portales, the market place, and the Depucion Build-

Cocharo.

Flower Market. Washington Monument. Juarez Monument. American Apartments.

ing. This word Zocolo means center and their Zocolo besides being the center of Mexico is rich in ancient history only a little of which we can relate. The Cathedral is on the foundation of the old Aztec Temple where in ages past all the religious rites of the Aztec Indians took place. They were sun worshippers, and the most noteworthy factor of their religion was that of human sacrifice. Here thousands of human lives were offered up and the Sacrificial stone on which thousands were dispatched, is now in the Museum of Art in this city. This Cathedral was captured later in 1820 by Cortez. This is also where, during the disturbance of last summer the Government soldiers fought a mob of citizens and after the battle about sixty Peons lay dead on the Zocolo.

From here we drive down the Paseo to Chapultepec. This word in Aztec dialect means grasshopperhill. This is a beautiful park built around a hill on which is located the President's palace. The park is made up of small lagoons and much artificial scenery added to the natural grandeur, and it is a selection in location that is well befitting the rulers. It was inhabited ages before the white man ever visited North America. In fact, some attempt to prove by the bible that Mexico was originally the Garden of Eden.

During the American War with Mexico in 1847, we captured Chapultepec and that was about the only time that an American had ever been allowed in all parts of the castle. During the President's vacation visitors are allowed to visit many of the chambers and apartments but not all. This was the home of Diaz given over recently to Madero at the time of his evacuation or resignation.

Driving through this park we have the unusual pleasure of seeing the family of Madero in their carriage, and being Americans, we attract their attention as well as they ours. This park is policed by the President's staff in gorgeous uniforms.

We must now hurry on for we only have time for dinner and then to Mexico's national sport or pastime the bull fight. We must arrive early, no later than two o'clock as the crowd is going fast, although hostilities do not begin until three. On account of there being few reserved seats we must

Chipultapec.

go early, the same as at the ball game at home. The crowd is on its way in taxis at full speed for there is no speed limit here except the power of your machine, cocheros drawn by galloping ponies that look as though every feeble jump would be their last, street cars that are not in every day use, that rattle and jingle like our cross town rolling stock, and, in fact, every sort of a conveyance that can be pressed into service. This is the only time that we see Mexico when it shows any desire to hurry, for this ordinarily is the land of manana meaning tomorrow. We hear it everywhere.

We file in, even at this hour, to a fairly well filled amphitheatre. The Government soldiers are in command but have no duty to perform today. It is a noisy boisterous crowd of good

Cathedral and Zocolo.

natured Mexicans with a sprinkling of Spaniards, Americans and a few other nationalities. The big sombrero is much in evidence and here like elsewhere we get the fumes of the Buentono the Mexican cigarette. A policed band is playing a national air and all is gaiety and mirth.

Promptly at three o'clock the gates leading into the great enclosure are thrown open, and with much pomp and display of gay colors, flashing capes and gold braid, the troopers of this fight march in. There is the Matador who does the killing, the Picador who rides the horses, the Banderillara who places the banderillas, and the Toreodor who play the capes. After a short parade around the enclosure, all is in readiness with two horses, or rather, crippled old ponies in the ring, the Picadors stationed at intervals, and now, look out for the Toro. Here he comes, bounding in like a rubber ball, looking peeved indeed. He carries a tassel between his shoulders that has been placed by the attendant from above as he enters. This is held in place by a spear, and of course after several days of fasting and of torment adds nothing to his good disposition. He takes a hurried survey of the surroundings and suddenly, with head down, and tail up, starts for the nearest object, and he certainly does make them side step and beat it out of his way. Over the fence goes a Matador who has just escaped, and without hesitation he is after another red cape and generally makes things lively for a time. After several fruitless attempts, he is so manipulated that he will charge a horse, and down goes the whole business in a heap, horse and rider tumbling over each other until the bull is flagged in another direction. If the horse is able to get up he is mounted again and made to face another attack, this time probably never to rise again. Only a few minutes is allowed for the horses in the ring, but it often proves fatal to both, and sometimes both escape, but the crowd yells their disapproval if the bull fails to attack the horses, and frequently is retired in disgrace. The only chance for the bull's life, however, is to show the white feather and refuse to fight.

The bugle blows, and if able the horses are taken out and the banderillaras, take the attention of the bull. Certain rules govern the placing of the banderillas which make it one of the most dangerous appearing performances of the fight. They must be placed in the shoulders from a position in front of the bull while he is making a charge. They are also held in place by spears and their placing still further throws him into a rage. Three pairs of these are usually placed during the time alloted, so he is a well decorated beast before they get through with him. It looks as though the banderillaras would be torn to pieces with each attempt, but he always, or nearly always escapes. A few minutes is allowed for this performance also, and the bugle sounds again. Now the star performance is on. The Matador dedicates the bull to the President, or, if he is not present, to the Empresairo the Manager, by announcing "that he will lose his life or present this bull."

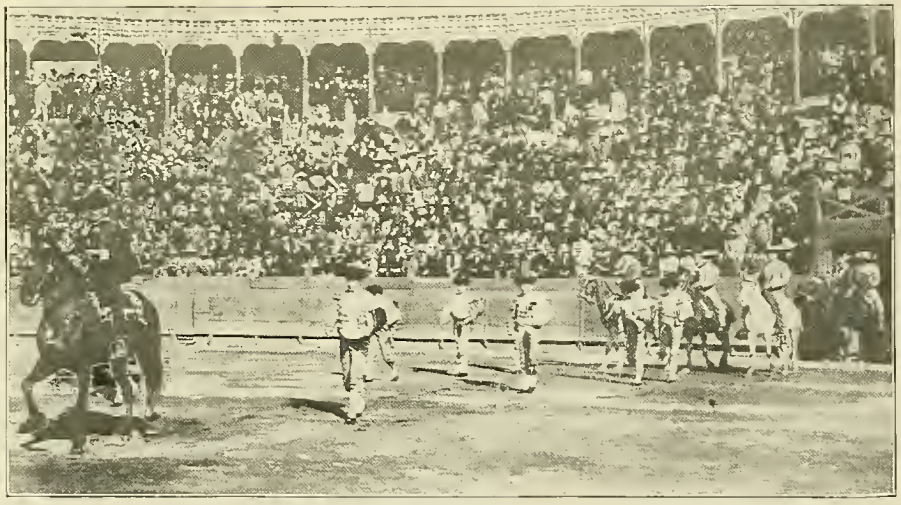
Meantime the bull is being kept in action by cape-playing, and you get many a thrill and hairbreadth escape before the finish. The bull about this time usually begins to feel that this is a cut and dried affair, and that he is being made the fall guy, and sometimes indicates a change of heart by jumping the inner fence into the runway between the ring and the spectators. Much to his disgust, however, he finds the next opening leads him back to the ring.

The Matador's speech being ended, he tosses his fancy cape aside, and with a flaming red cloth and sword, prepares to finish the contest. He is now the center of attraction, and the many charges of the bull is gracefully avoided. The fool bull devotes his attention to the rag and brainlessly misses the Matador. When he is about exhausted from many attempts, he is worked into a favorable position or one that the rules require, and as he lowers his head for a final effort, the Matador attempts to place the sword in front of the shoulder blade to reach the heart, and if successful, the victim slowly sinks to the ground and is dispatched by an attendant, who, with a short dagger stabs him just back of the horns, and his arena career is over.

If an object lesson is to be drawn from this play I leave it to you to find. Personally I saw no greater hero in the performance or in all Mexico than the poor horse who blindfolded is led to his sacrifice fully aware of the danger.

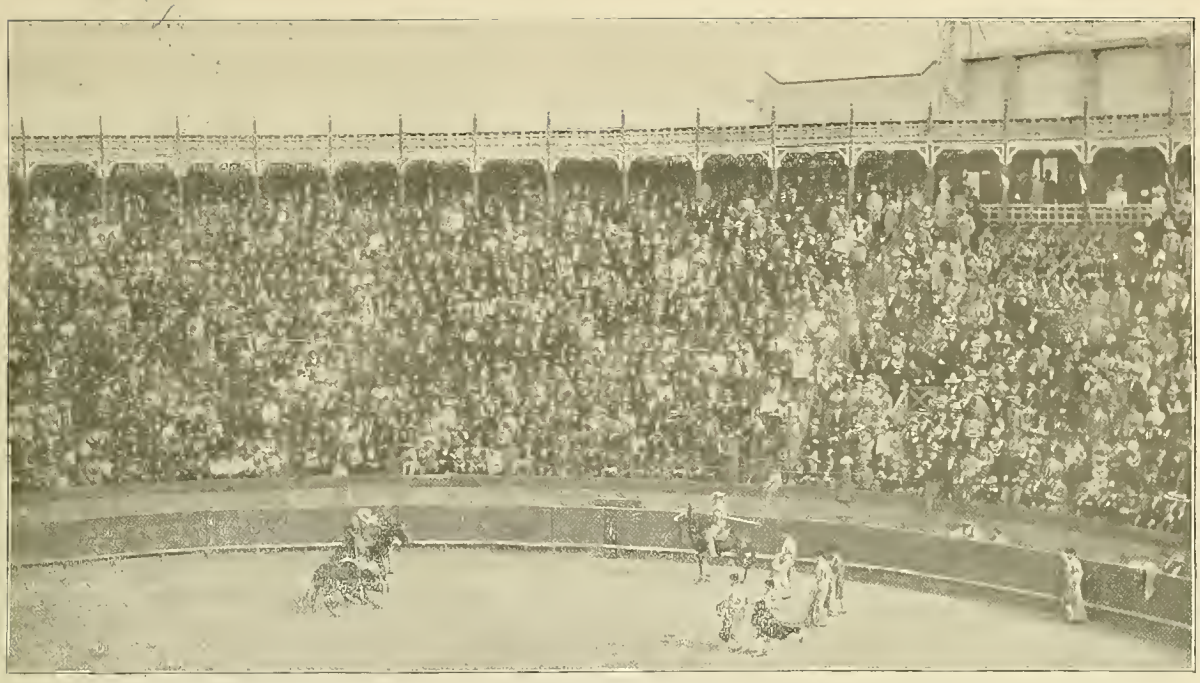
Three white mules gayly decorated, are hurriedly brought in, hitched to the dead warrior and he is dragged out. If there are dead horses, another trio are doing similiar service. The ring is now cleared and ready for a repetition of the last. Usually about six bulls are killed at an afternoon performance. The Matadors today are two of the most renowned of all Spain and Mexico; one Pastor from Spain, and one Gaona, a native.

Rather exhausted we now ride back to town and enter the parade of individuals and their equipage on San Francisco ave. This is a regular semi-weekly event, beginning at about seven o'clock. The street is filled with carriages and automobiles many of the very finest in the world. Pedestrians all colors, kinds and varieties, fill the walk and street. This has been a busy day, and night welcomes our return home.



The Parade.

Monday morning, February 12th, opens with the same glorious sunshine and invigorating air, and we are off to the National Palace to be present at the reception of the Cuban Minister at the Depucion Building. After luncheon we take the car out to San Angel eight miles from the city, where is located San Angel Inn, an old monastery of much historic worth, that dates back two centuries, most of which we will be obliged to omit. One story that is told and we know to be true, (for we have seen the papers, now in the hands of an American friend of ours) is that a package of letters were discovered under an old stairway when the old building and gardens were being converted into an inn. These pa-



The Picadors.

pers revealed a plot to murder the viceroy.

Much of the grandeur of olden times is still to be seen among the statuary, paintings, hangings and bric-a-brac of the old inn. The monks' dining room is now turned into a billiard room; the most distinguished and antiquated in the world, if this is of any interest in connection with a billiard parlor and the original billiard table belonging to Maximilliano is the most noteworthy of the three that occupy this time honored edifice.

The place is largely made up of rare gardens through which winding paths lead to fountains, carvings and statuary of ancient designs. It is the most wonderful and most picturesque point visited thus far which is only in keeping with historic Mexico. Situated as this monastery is, over-looking the snow capped mountains, one cannot help but realize how fervently nature's gifts appealed to the monks of olden times, and how splendidly they were rewarded in this ever changing panorama of our Maker's handiwork.

Another one of those beautiful Mexican days that we now begin to take as a matter of course, confronts us this thirteenth day of February, and again we are off, this time to the Thieves Market.

This is the place where all goods on sale are articles that have been stolen. The laws of Mexico are not like those of the States, and anyone who can make a successful get-away with another one's property, can offer it here for sale and find a ready buyer. This is a peculiar market with wonderful variety of goods that have been stolen. You would hardly expect a thief to run away with a safe, but you find lots of them here for sale. Everythink in fact from trinkets of no value up to the heaviest pieces of furniture. The well stocked market gives evidence that we were not misinformed regarding our baggage, and had we not taken the precaution that we did upon our arrival we might have found our trunks this morning among the many others.

We take time now to visit the National Museum where a wealth of ancient and curious things are on exhibition. Among a few of the most interesting are the Calendar Stone, the Sacrificial Stone, some rare paintings of Maximilian and Carlota, and the gold coach of Maximilian.

The Calendar Stone is a mammoth round rock weighing thirty-five tons with a flat surface covered with hieroglyphics the meaning of which no white man has ever known, but by which Aztec Indians calculated time. It is a wonder in itself, as their days, weeks, months and years were accurately kept count of, yet we have never been able to decipher entirely how it was done. Those who have devoted most study to it have been able to work out the problem to a certain extent, yet much remains a secret.

The Sacrificial Stone is the one taken from the old Aztec Temple in the Zocolo, and was in almost continuous use during the reign of the Aztec. The sacrifices were always those of a human being who were placed on this stone and the heart cut out while the victim still lived. There never was a time during the reign that a human heart was not burning. You will see by this the victims, who were those of different tribes captured in battle, must have been a continuous stream of humanity. The burning heart was to convey the departing spirit to the spirit land. This reign was ended by Cortez, who, with a band of 360 Spaniards and 40 horses conquered a tribe of twelve millions in the year 1520.

Maximilian's gold coach is one of the most elaborate ever produced. Built in England it had much of the type of the English Royalty in equipage. There is nothing of the splendor omitted, but there is much of extravagance added. It is said to have solid gold trimmings throughout and there is an abundance of it. It is spoken of as the Gold Coach.

The Vanquished Toro.

Government Palace.

Wednesday morning, February fourteenth, we are on our way to Guadalupe, a distance of only four miles from the city. If it were not for the religious tale told of this hillside sanctuary, it would be of little more consequence than hundreds of other small settlements of Mexico. Guadalupe is Mexico's national patron saint. As the story goes, one Diego, a humble Indian, on his way to work had a vision of a virgin who commanded that a temple should be built in her name on the nearby barren hilltop, and gave him as a signal of her divinity the command to pluck the roses that he should find growing there. Roses on a barren hill was a miracle, so he gathered them in his blanket and took them to the Bishop and upon unfolding the blanket, there appeared upon it the wonderful impression of this virgin. The virgin in her impatience, stamped her little foot and straightway there appeared the most wonderful spring, now made sacred. The Bishop now convinced of the divinity of the virgin set about erecting a temple in her name. This story is as sacred to the natives of all classes of Mexico as the story of the Crucifix is to the Christian, and to disbelieve it would be an unpardonable sin. To substantiate this story, the temple is there at the very peak of the sacred hill, and still another one of later date and greater proportions.

The later temple is a wonderful edifice and words cannot describe what it means to the natives. Pilgrimages are made from every part of the republic to visit it.

During the feast days the pilgrims crawl on their knees for blocks before they reach the sanctuary.

We climb the long line of winding steps to the temple which is in itself some climb, and enter the inspired place of worship with awed silence, Mass is on and the worshippers on bended knees from entrance to pulpit are crossing, sprinkling and in other ways signifying their devotion.

We are especially favored by being allowed to visit the cemetery just back of the temple, and to gaze on the graves of many former noted inhabitants.

Thursday, February fifteenth, we are out early and after a walk by the Washington Monument in the course of erection and to be dedicated next week we visit the new National Theatre, also in the course of construction. The Theatre is being built by the Federal Government at an enormous expense of twenty million, Mexican money, ten million of gold in our currency. It is built of solid Carara marble imported from Italy. The curtain is of glass made and designed by Tiffany of New York, and is still on exhibition in that city, for which an admission of 50 cents is charged. Just recently $10,000 was spent in placing seats for the Government Officials to observe what it will look like. It has been building twelve years up to date, and it is estimated that it will be completed in two years more.

As we leave here for another interesting suburb, we just begin to realize the wonderful variety of interesting points there is for the tourist.

Xochimilco, pronounced Sochemilko, is to be reached by a trolley line recently completed. Until recently it was only accessible by wagon roads. A line of coaches and automobiles have previously furnished the conveyauces, a distance of twenty miles. This is a picturesque old town of thatched houses, population of 20,000 on the banks of the wonderful floating gardens anchored here.

The settlement is only a village for it must be remembered that 20,000 Mexicans are housed in an area that would accommodate only about five hundred in our country.

These floating gardens are different from any other spot on earth. They were originally begun by the throwing of dirt from the canals up onto the roots and reeds of the swampy land. This is a sort of a mossy earth and canals have been cut around each owner's little plot of ground or island. There seems to be no substantial foundation, but a sufficient quantity of the rich soil has been so laid over the mass of undergrowth that the islands are made very productive and are well watered by absorption. In fact, all of Mexico City is built on a bed of what was a lake before Diaz drained it. The water of the thousands of canals is supplied by two mammoth springs that have a discharge of thousands of gallons per minute. They form, in fact, quite a river that empties into Lake Tescoca.

The area of the floating gardens is about five square miles, and within this area most of the vegetables for the city are grown. Here vegetables in all stages of advancement are found all seasons of the year. Each owner will plant a patch of probably one quarter acre. In years past the owners surrounded their holdings by a row of trees making the gardens resemble a vast forest of thin growth. The vege-

Coffee Trees.

Thieves Market.

tables are marketed by the use of huge canal boats that are paddled down the canals to the city during the nights, giving fresh vegetables to the six hundred thousand people of Mexico City every morning.

Besides being the city's maintenance, these gardens are also the city's playgrounds. On Sundays and feast days the throngs spend the day riding through the canals, and are entertained at the many small amusement places there.

Today, Friday 16th, we are to visit the San Juan market. In comparison to other markets of this city, this is the most interesting. The vegetables are fresh and are of very good quality from the Floating Gardens. We see here an odd variety of food stuffs, among them the base of the Pulque plant or maguey. This is supplied in bulk, without leaves or stems, and cut down well to the base, the remaining part about the size of a bushel basket.

Grenadines and Mangos are among the popular fruits. Tortillas and Enchiladas are made, fried and sold at the market, none of which, however, we would care to sample.

After dinner we visit the newspaper offices and view their primitive plants. Only a few are supplied with modern equipment, principally on account of the cheap labor obtainable there.

This is the one eventful day of the trip, as far as anticipation will make an event. At 5:30 Saturday morning, February 17th, we are all astir preparing for Cuernavaca. Each day since arriving in Mexico we have been posted regarding bandit conditions there, but after due deliberation and advice from the American Consul General, we decide to brave the Zapatistas. We strip ourselves of all valuables for if the train is stopped we may only be robbed and allowed to go on our way. Some of our friends console us by saying that even though our train is shot at, we may not be hit and even though we are pierced, we may not be killed. This seems to be sufficiently consoling to warrant our journey. At any rate, we have come a long way to visit, not only Mexico City, but also the surroundings, and we still have

Cathedral Guadelupe.

that thirst for romance that prompted us to leave our home in the North. While it is now evident that we will not be able to make all of our side trips anticipated, this attempt is to be made. Our journey starts at 7:30 with a company of soldiers on board to guard our train, and we proceed with precaution and some little degree of anxiety. This morning's "Herald" gives the following:

"Cuernavaca, Feb. 16.—Fighting will begin to-morrow at Santa Maria and willl be continued until the rebels are exterminated or dislodged. General Juvencio Robles, chief in command in the district which comprises the states in which Zapatistas are operating, returned tonight from Jojutla and under his immediate direction a vigorous campaign will be started against the rebel forces between this city and Tres Marias. General Robles has established headquarters near the residence of Governor Naranjo. He arrived at 6 o'clock tonight from Jojutla in a train consisting of ten coaches bringing infantry, two batteries of rapid

Calendar Stone.

fire guns and one of mountain artillery.''

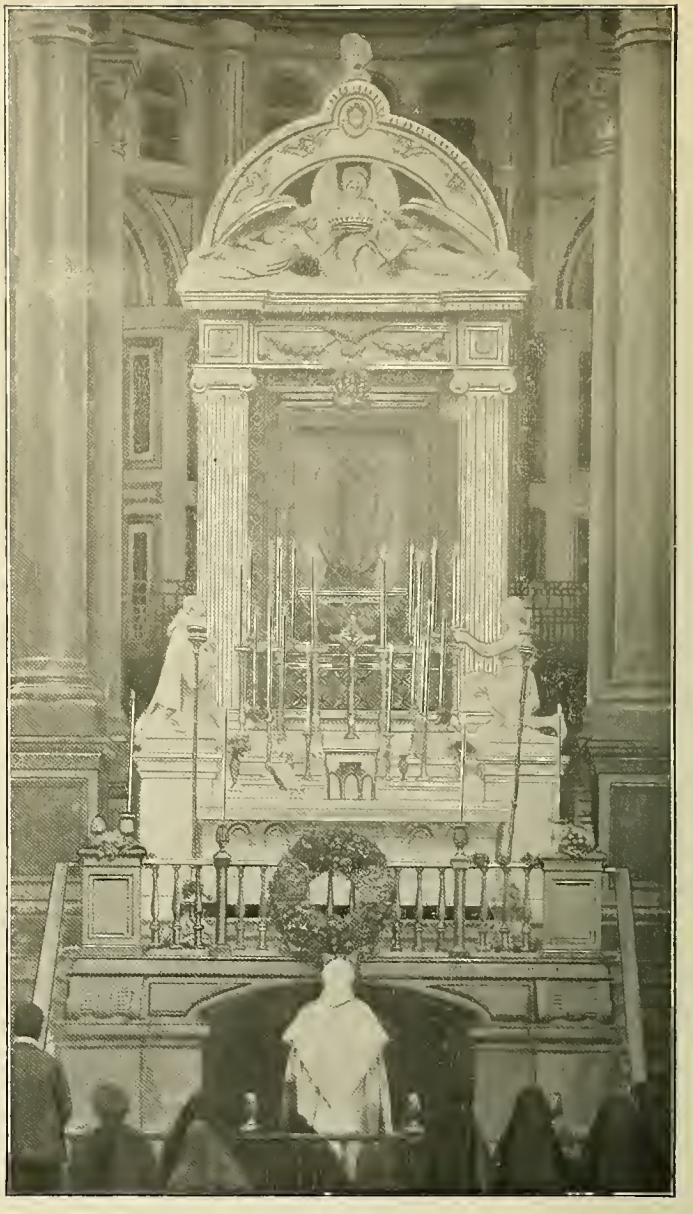
Our trip is over one of the many scenic routes of Mexico, and its grandeur is beyond description. If I were gifted even with the power of imagination, nothing I could say would do justice to the awfulness of the canyons, the grandeur of the mountains, and the beauty of the fields below.

We gradually raise to an altitude of ten thousand feet by a winding road bed that is the result of American ingenuity, and we view from the dizzy heights the wonders below. The green of the upper mountains as seen from above, blend into the yellow fields far below, and still majestically towering above are the snows of faithful old Popocatapetl and Ixtaccehuatl, meaning the Lady of the Snow. These mountains are usually spoken of as Popo and his bride.

At El Parque our train is halted for a time and naturally we are out to discover the cause. A glance from the step of the coach reveals a small body of Zapatistas that we afterwards learn have come into the town and laid down their arms and that we are in no immediate danger. They wear a look of much anxiety and show signs of having seen service. Their swarthy countenances gives one a feeling of uneasiness, but we finally proceed after the incident, feeling more assured that the balance of the journey will be uninterrupted.

At Tres Marias we reach the summit, a ride of three hours, and begin our descent into the basin on the other side of the range in which Cuernavaca was founded over four hundred years ago, and it looks it every bit. We Americans would say it is entirely worn out as scarcely a house has been built in it since the time of Cortez.

The sleepy old town has no mission on earth except to breed laziness. It sleeps and wakes to find its borders filled with soldiers, and returns to sleep again. No place on earth could be more restful, and no spot so much



Altar Cathedral Guadelupe.

Xochimilco—Thatched Houses.

the heart of restfulness as this quiet, quaint, curious old Hotel Morelos, which was a fort built by the generals under Cortez and reeks with romantic history which we must omit, but a peek into its peaceful Pateo is a glimpse of the grandeur of olden times not to be found anywhere else, and even now, as we rock and write the fragrance of the soft balmy atmosphere steals into our soul until we sleep with the rest of the village.

A few points of interest of which there are many to be visited is:

''Cuernavaca conquered by Cortez, April 1521; population about 15,000; Elevation 4,921, lower than Mexico 2,463, distance from Mexico 74 miles, over the Nat'l Ry's of Mexico. The greatest scenic route for its length in all America. Palace of Cortez finished 1531, Cathedral commenced 1529, Church of Franciscans 1535, Borda's Garden commenced 1762, cost $1,250,000, residence of Maximilian and Carlota during the Empire, the Public Library, Hacienda of Ataltemulco founded by Cortez 1535, still owned by his descendants, Acapaeingo, Maximil-

Xochimilco—Floating Gardens.

iau's country residence, Tialtenango, ruins of oldest sugar mill on the continent, founded by Cortez 1530, also celebrated Shrine of miraculous image, San Anton, beautiful waterfall and Indian potteries, Ancient Aztec sculptures and carving, Prehistoric ruins of Xochicalco. Nothing more wonderful or grand outside of Egypt; Temple of Twpoztlan, well preserved Aztec temples, Amatitlan "Stone of Victory" Aztec sculptures and Hieroglyphics, etc."

The Borda Garden as the legend goes, is the favorite stamping ground of a ghost of Mr. Borda, who in life was a multimillionaire even in that early day and who is said to have been found murdered there, but never a centavos of his fortune found. The favorite season of the year for the ghost's walk is in May probably because his death occurred that month. One can not visit this garden and listen to the earnestness of this tale as told by the natives, and in fact by many Americans, who testify to having seen this ghost, without a feeling that, at least, their belief is sincere.

This garden was the winter home of Maximilian and Carlota, and was indeed all that could be desired by the rulers. Rare shubbery, rich vintage and wonderful watering places and fountains fill the ancient old play ground.

You find also here the coffee tree that in itself is peculiar in its likes and dislikes. It refuses to grow in the sun, refuses to grow in the shade, rather it seeks its own environment mid other growths.

Cocoanuts, bananas and millions of other tropical vegetation, and fruit that seem to have been sampled here still grow, now almost unattended, which adds to the picturesqueness of the surroundings. An entire story could be written on the wonders of this little patch and still not do it justice. It is indeed a tale of another day.

This afternoon we are rudely roused from our dreamy peacefulness by hurried announcements that another battle was to take place almost within sight of the village, and we all rush to the roof of our old converted fort for a view of it. Evidently though the generals are not giving out information as we receive it for we are kept momentarily in suspense without result. We have no fears of our safety here as the little town is well garrisoned, besides it is not likely the Zapatistas want anything the city has to offer, although the recent bride and mother-in-law of Zapata are held prisoners here in the old Cortez palace, now the Government building.

Popocatapetl.

Our excitement over, we visit the old cathedral and its surroundings, old, moss-covered, crumbled and decayed it stands, the blankest, discolored old wall it has been our gratification to see. Three hundred years before Chicago was started this temple was the shrine of worship, and we still find the faithful doing homage there.

The Plaza or burying ground is a sort of a mixture between a cemetery and a park. Children use it as a play ground, the natives idle away their time there, and frequently are found eating their meals on the grave of some notable of hundreds of years ago.

Sunday morning, February 18th, breaks peacefully over this little village and nothing but the bugle call of the army stationed here disturbs the stillness.

We hear much unauthorized war talk but supposedly inside information tells us today the battle is on in earnest. For three weeks the Zapatistas have been in command of the little village of Santa Maria resisting the efforts of Government soldiers, but today they must go. Sunday here differs little from other days commercially, so you can understand that the wheel of commerce turns slowly at all times. Today we are to have war but even this creates no great excitement. The atmosphere is too peaceful and the surroundings too serene to be disturbed by such trifles. We have worked our ticket as a press correspondent and have received permission to accompany the white cross to the battle field, or at least to the fort, so after dinner armed with a field glass and kodak we are prepared to face the enemy. The fort is a converted factory built into a temporary fort for the occasion. It is about three miles from Cuernavaca and probably from one and a half to two miles from Santa Maria, the stronghold of the enemy.

The few cavalry left at the barracks is saddled and in readiness. The infantry rest on their arms. Messengers are hurrying to and fro, and the aspect generally is warlike. As we take our place on the roof, we have a splendid view of surroundings. As though waiting our presence, the rurales are immediately ordered out and are off at

Ixtaccihuatl.

double quick toward Santa Maria station which is about one mile from the town itself in a Northerly direction from the fort. We learn that they are sent to a special train waiting there and are to be taken to the relief of the little town Treinta. The officials give us no opportunity to use our kodak as pictures of the interior are not allowed, but we catch the infantry, the outer guard, on our way in. The "Daily Mexican" gives the following account of the battle:

"Cuernavaca, Feb. 17,—"Zapatistas derailed the engine of the train from Balsas at kilometer 148, near Zochitepec, at 12:45 o'clock this afternoon and in the firing which ensued, the detachment of the Eighteenth cavalry, which was guarding the train, exhausted its ammunition. The fact was wired to Cuernavaca and a special train was sent at once with 100 men of the Eleventh cavalry under command of Col. Jiminez Castro."

Now, a single prisoner is brought in by a small company of soldiers and is immediately brought up to the roof where we are and is required to give information regarding the enemy. He points out the locality where the bandits are in waiting. Now, a wounded soldier who has ventured beyond the lines or come in range of a party in ambush, is brought in on a stretcher and our only English speaking associate is called to the assistance. Left alone for a time we scan the surrounding country and occasionally get a glimpse of the small band of retreating Zapatistas. They hurry from one sheltering baranca, small canyon, to a clump of underbrush or a stone fence, of which there are hundreds in this country for the Federals now seem to have them on the run. The nature of the surroundings makes this almost an impregnable defense. No firing within hearing has taken place today, or since the battle nearly two weeks ago. As night falls some of the skirmishing troops and outer guards are called in and word comes to us that tomorrow is to be the great attack. Santa Maria is to be taken or not a soldier left in the fort. We have been notified to be on hand early tomorrow if we desire to take our part in the proceedings.

Before daylight this morning, Monday, February 19th, we are on our way to the Fort with a special cochero drawn by two pokey mules that are lashed and urged all the way. Our faithful driver, however, with all of the excitement and urging, does not forget to raise his hat in reverence as we pass the cathedral, evidently feeling this will be his last opportunity.

Cannons are booming before we are half way there and it is with much anxiety that we continue the trip for with each previous shelling of the hills, the Zapatistas have come out in sufficient numbers to chase everybody into the sheltering folds of the fort.

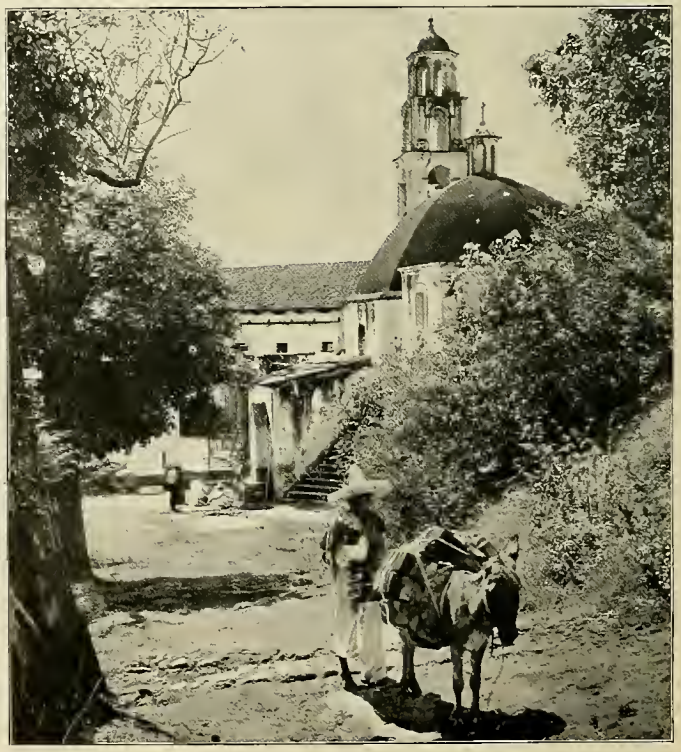
We reach our destination in safety just as the sun blazes forth over the snow capped Popocatapetl and here is a scene more stirring than it has ever been our fortune to witness.

The heavy artillery anchored in the enclosure is roaring their defiance and spitting streaks of fire in turn.

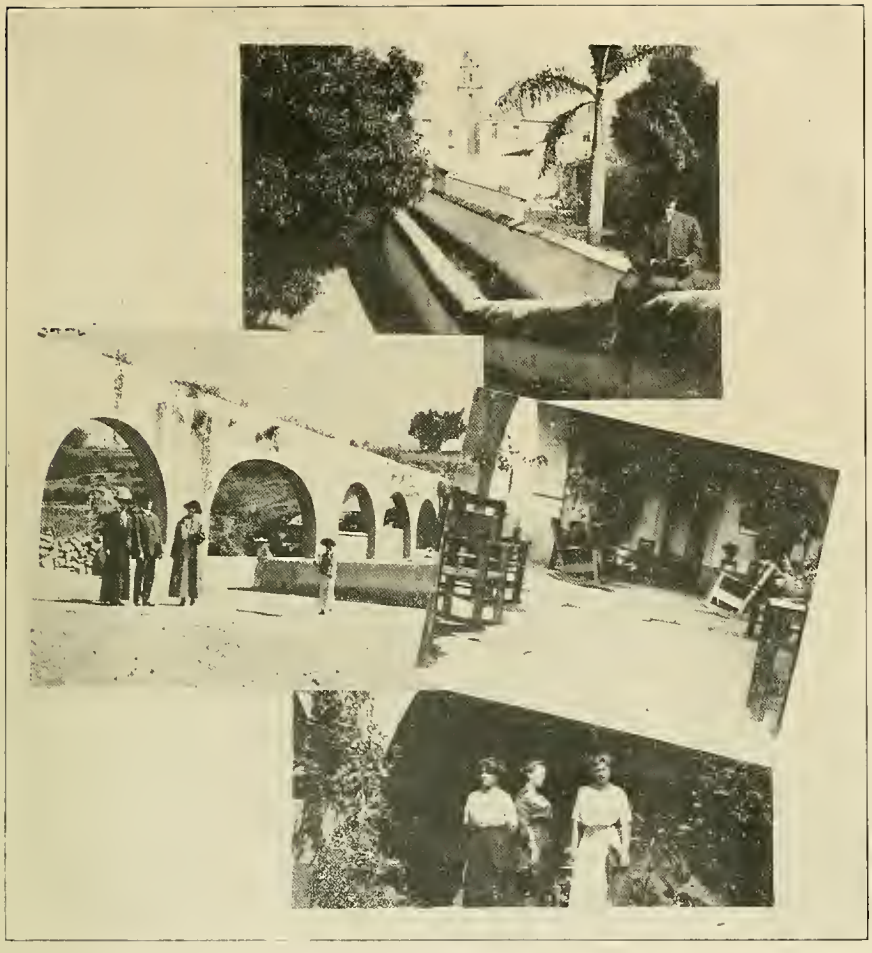
The shells are exploding on the distant hill with mighty roar and vibration. Already a great hole has been torn in the side of the old cathedral, the only remaining building in Santa Maria, and at last we are on the firing line a witness to war in earnest.

Contrary to former attacks, no Zapatistas showed themselves at this time. As we prepare to return again to the roof we have the honor and pleasure of a hurried salute and handshake with General Robles, the one in command as he and his staff are on their way preparatory to leading the troops from the fort. The cannons cease and the light artillery, rurales and infantry are off at full speed to take the hill before the enemy can return. The surroundings had been thoroughly shelled, but danger still lies in the wake for no amount of shelling can reach the thousands of canyons and crevices into which these Indians who know the country can creep.

The soldiers are soon swallowed up in the canyons, but a puff of smoke and the echo of a rifle shot tells the tale of guerilla warfare. We have not long to wait now, for events follow in rapid succession, and soon the grey forms of the horsemen are seen mounting the hill to the cross that has long been their aim. Just at this instant a white streak of marching forms come from the West of the hill and almost instantaneously another from the East, practically surrounding the point now taken by the Government soldiers. Panic takes possession of us now for our excitement turns to terror. What does it all mean? Have the murderous Zapatistas tricked the army into this trap and are we to be a witness to the slaughter of a thousand soldiers, for this approaching company must outnumber them by a large majority. We are just now beginning to realize the horrors of warfare. No one speaks English, no one can explain. All are excited. Every puff of smoke, every rapid rattling of the gattling guns adds more horror to the situation. The two white lines close in, join forces and slowly creep to the top of the hill. The firing has almost ceased. Have the soldiers surrendered? Have the greater number taken possession? If



On Road to Cuernavaca.



Patio of Morelos Hotel and Cuernavaca Scenes.

so, this means death to every soldier who, but a few minutes before had gallantly left the fort. Dimly our field glasses show the outlines but we can observe no firing. At last it dawns upon us that the two white lines from right and left are the troops from another fort that have appeared according to schedule for a flank movement that carries out the good generalship of the old warrior, and our fears have been all for naught. We learn the firing was to still further clear the ravines.

Shortly now the hospital corps are ordered out and are soon hidden from view and in less than half an hour returu with three wounded, and in another half hour the company return with thirty prisoners.

We are scheduled to leave Cuernavaca for Mexico City in an hour, but how can we be expected to leave a scene so entrancing as this, one that will never be repeated in our lives, and one that will go to make up more pages of Mexican warfare history.

We finally find our comrade in the hospital section and we are told that the ride back to Cuernavaca may be more hazardous than the trip to the fort, for the enemy is now scattered in small parties and they have no hesitancy to step out from under cover to take a shot at the enemy or a gringo, even when they know it is fatal to themselves, and they have no respect for the White Cross emblem either.

After assuming something of the garb of the natives, and instructions having been given to our waiting cochero, we start for town, but before we had gone far the driver turns to us and with excited jabbering and gestures calls our attention to something in the distance. Whether he has discovered another tribe of Indians awaiting in ambush or whether another battle is raging in other distant hills, we were not able to tell. Wrapped in the native's garb, we have little desire or opportunity to make much investigation as we prefer to remain hidden as much as possible. We finally distinguish huge clouds of smoke raising from over the mountain range that does not resemble a battle but is tremendous indeed. We arrive at Cuernavaca in safety and now find that we have witnessed on our way a volcano in active eruption.

As we are about to take the train, we find this is the crew to whom troops were sent in relief yesterday. From appearances the reports have not been exaggerated. Bullet holes are plentiful and about one out of every three of the window lights are broken. The car carrying the soldiers and the vestibule have been riddled. Reports say about one hundred and twenty shots were fired and they must have all found their mark. This does not tend to make our fears less, and it is reported by the conductor that another battle is expected near Santa Maria as the insurgents have been driven back from there and it is likely they will charge again. In that event our guard would be inadequate. In the event of an attack we are instructed to lay flat in the aisle so the baggage is placed on the seats and plenty of room made for a sudden duck at the sound of the first report. We finally make a start but the trip past Santa Maria is uneventful and we are in a reasonably safe territory without any harm coming to us. Before Mexico City is reached we get the news that the train in the opposite direction was held up at El Parque. We are indeed thankful to have escaped but now glad to have had the experience.

The day is not yet ended for as soon as we arrive at Mexico City we must immediately dress for the Charity Ball to be given at Sala Bucareli. Here we have the honor of meeting Senor Gustavo, Y See Senora Madero, Mr. and Mrs. Madero, brother of the President of Mexico, Honorable Arnold Shanklin, American Consul General, and many other notables,

Borda Garden.

Mexico City's high society is extremely exclusive, and this rare occasion is greatly appreciated and enjoyed.

Today, Tuesday, February twentieth, we visit the post office, a most artistically designed building, both interior and exterior quite unlike our Government buildings, and in size entirely inadequate for even our second or third class cities. One can hardly conceive how the mail of a city of six hundred thousand can be handled in a building of its proportions. Still we must remember that most of the six hundred thousand are not given to correspondence or business of any nature.

We have some business to attend to today, such as reservations, etc. for it is now time to think of returning and we too are thoroughly convinced of the dangers to attempt to make any further out of town trips.

Wednesday, February 21st, we give our attention to a tour of Mexico City industries and shops. The most extensive manufacture of all Mexico is the Buentono Cigarette factory. This is a $6,000,000 incorporation. The factory with its different departments covers four city blocks, and its capacity is twelve million cigarettes daily, most of these we learn are sold here in the Republic. A very small portion are made for export. We might wonder how this enormous consumption can be fumed by the popnlation of this Republic; but it would readily explain itself to you if you were here, for among the Peons of the lower class, men, women and children alike continually smoke cigarettes.

The factory has its own church, which is one of the finest in Mexico, and that is saying a good deal.

Its own school and theatre. Its stables and horses are much like those belonging to our large industries which is nnusual here. Three thousand and twenty are employed today. The wonderful machines that turn out three hundred cigarettes per minute are in nse and there are many of them. The tobacco is imported largely from other countries although we learn that it could be growu here if there was anyone who showed a desire to cultivate it, but cultivation is not much in the line of this people.

This incorporation are leaders of almost all public enterprises. They have their own aeroplane and are much interested in the art of aviation.

Infantry, Zapatistas, Rurales.

A Baranca.

Street Sweeper, Street Sprikler, Policeman.

Some of the department stores, of which there are half a dozen, have very good stock of their kind, but prices for American goods are much higher than in our country. There is much French import and on account of duty, French goods usually sell a little cheaper than with us. Americans say there is nothing they care to buy at any price. Shopping at home with the women folks is a delight, but here a task.

This is the home of the opal and many other precious stones, which can be bought much cheaper than in our country. The jewelry stores are very pretentious and there are hundreds of curio stores well stocked, but the last two years have been very severe with them for few tourists in the recent past have been visiting here.

The pulque shop which is the licensed drinking place, usually occupies the corner location as does the saloon of our country. Pulque is the national intoxicating beverage and is extracted from the Pulque plant or Maquey. It has a decidedly demoralizing effect, and it is not unusual for the over-indulgent to go home and beat his wife, for the laws of the land allow this. This may be the reason why so few Peons marry but instead, take unto themselves a mate.

The street car service is as good as in any of our cities, the fare varying from 6 cents to 10 cents according to the distance you are to ride. The 6 cent fare would only be 3 cents of our money however. It is owned and operated by Canadian Capital, but most of the industries of consequence are in charge of Americans for this nation lacks the thrift of our people. The best of the doctors and dentists are Americans and have a splendid practice.

San Francisco Avenue is the main shopping street and is thronged during the hours that the shops are open. From one to three o'clock are noon hours and nearly every shop is closed during that time.

February tweuty-second being Washington's Birthday, is observed here, perhaps more notably this year than ordinarily, for today is the unveiling of the Washington Monument that has been given to Mexico City by the American colony. We are favored with seats in the Grand Stand by the side of the President, American Ambassador, the Honorable Henry Lane Wilson, Consul General Honorable Arnold Shanklin and many others prominent in American affairs of State.

The President and staff are ushered in with a great deal of playing of trumpets and the gorgeously uniformed guards are in attendance. The Government band plays the national air, the opening address in English is given by Mr. Hudson, followed by the Ambassador and replied to by the President who speaks in Spanish. Altogether it is a very imposing unveiling, quite befitting the Great Father of our Country.

This is only one of the many beautiful statutes that have been given to this nation by other Governments, and it occupies the Glorietta Dina Marca in the midst of the American Colony.

This evening, we witness a game of Pelota, a very fascinating game and very popular with the natives. Contrary to the bull fight, it is a gamble and as there seems to be no restrictions to gambling the hand books and pools are doing a thriving business. We are not able to learn all the rules of the game, but a small ball much the appearance of a golf ball, evidently being light and springey, is thrown from a long narrow basket-like affair attached to the hand. The game is played in a Building with two high blank walls at either end from which the ball bounds back into the territory allowed for it, and it requires some very lively hustling to catch it on the come back or perhaps on the bound and throw it again all in the same movement. The space allowed for the play is about one hundred feet wide and probably three hundred feet long. The ball is thrown about one hundred feet against the wall and made to bound back two hundred feet. They have certain plays that count and certain violations of the rules that we are not able to give, but it is exciting and interesting and we wonder why it has not become more popular in this country. A building was dedicated to this game in St. Louis during the World's Fair but it was never taken up to any extent by Americans.

Friday, February twenty-third, finds us laid up for repairs. The high altitude is affecting us as it does almost every one after about two weeks of it, until thoroughly acclimated, so we will only take a short stroll down the Plaza, and study the people and conditions as we find them. First we find the street sprinkler at work with his odd can. Then the street sweeper with his odd whisk for a broom, the only sort of a broom you would find in the Republic. Then in the panorama of oddities comes the squaw with her papoose strapped to her back. The cart and mule which is the method adopted quite largely for transporting heavy loads. This little mule or burro is loaded to the guards and it is astonishing to see the load the little fellows can carry. Now we wander down to

Public Laundry.

Portales.

APR 5 1912

Palm.

Pulque Plant.

the public wash house where this nation does its daily wash, and as far as we can see, every day is wash day here. They seem just as likely to start at it at eleven o'clock at night as during the day. Much of the washing, however, is done on the banks of a nearby creek or mountain stream.

We meet the vendor everywhere and there is nothing marketable that the Mexican does not peddle. Now we hurriedly snap a coffin man who offers it for sale at a bargain price. Continued war stories today make us feel that this might not be a bad investment just now. While speaking of the morbid, the funeral car is an ever present sight in this city. The coffin is displayed without any sort of a screen or drapery. The silver handles are removed at the grave otherwise they would be dug up and stolen. The funeral train leaves the Zocolo regularly on trips to the cemeteries. The Peons seem to have no regular time of eating but they are always at it. The Tortillas and Anchelattas are made on the street, and sold at all times. We show our good servant Luz who is an adept at making them on the Matteta in our Cocina—kitchen—with the brassero—cookstove—in the back ground. This culinary act could not be performed by a Mexican in any other way. They must set the matteta on the floor or on the ground, a table or bench would not do for this purpose. No one knows why but it is not their way. This instrument is used to grind the corn and when the meal is mixed with water and patted into the form of a paucake, it is fried. It is the Mexican quick lunch and as often as they get a centavos they invest, regardless of the hour.

The light loads are carried on the head, and hundreds of these merchants are on the streets and in the doorways. The Mexican doorway would be our back door. They face the pateo which is the interior of the lot rather than the street.

The city policemen are stationed at their respective corners and seem to be drafted from undersized boys or young men. They have little authority and count for little. During the night the police lantern is set in the middle of the street or corner and anyone who can steal one of these lanterns and bring it to the station is entitled to a $25 reward. This probably serves to keep the policemen on watch. I wonder if that would not be a good plan in some districts in our country.

February twenty-fourth by our itinerary shows the day for departure has arrived, and we have little time for anything but packing up and preparation. Every day has been one of sunshine, warm and beautiful. Mexico has treated us to her usually good weather, and her best amusements; war and volcano included, everything but an earthquake. Characteristic of the people, we have been treated with every attention and courtesy, for which we are duly grateful these war times.

One need not journey across the ocean for foreign sights, historic adventure or seenery, for Mexico can supply it all, yet each successive trip to distant lands serves to add to our own patriotism and the joys of our own U. S. A.

Luz.

Pottery Vender.

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